

Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6826

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 7209

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AS, PT

SUBJECT: TIMOR

1. THE VICTORIAN BRANCH OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY HAS CALLED FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SANCTIONS AGAINST INDONESIA BECAUSE OF THE CONFLICT IN EAST TIMOR. THE ALP GROUP CALLED FOR AN END TO AUSTRALIAN MILITARY AID AND THE QTE CURTAILMENT OF ECONOMIC AID END QTE AND ASKED THAT THE SANCTIONS STAY IN FORCE UNTIL QTE INDONESIAN MILITARY INCURSIONS AND MILITARY BLOCKADES END QTE AGAINST EAST TIMOR END. THE VICTORIAN ALP CALLED FOR RECOGNITION OF QTE DE FACTO CONTROL END QTE BY FRETELIN OF EAST TIMOR AND AN INDICATION FROM THE GOA THAT IT WOULD RECOGNIZE A SELF-GOVERNING NATION OF EAST TIMOR. SOME UNION DELEGATES ALSO URGED STRONG ACTION SIMILAR TO THE BANS ON UNLOADING INDONESIAN SHIPPING WHICH ARE ALREADY IN FORCE IN MELBOURNE.

2. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM HAS NOT OPPOSED INDONESIAN MILITARY MOVES IN TIMOR.

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HE HAS, IN FACT, GIVEN TACIT SUPPORT TO THE INDONE-

SIANS REGRETTING ONLY THAT THEY DID NOT TAKE STRONG ACTION SOONER. RECENTLY, HOWEVER, FORMER DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER JIM CAIRNS ASKED A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION IN WHICH HE INDICATED SUPPORT FOR FRETELIN. MP KENNETH FRY AND SENATOR GEITZELDT, ALSO LABOR LEFT-WINGERS, STRONGLY CRITICIZED GOA POLICY FOLLOWING A RECENT TRIP TO TIMOR. CAIRNS AND OTHER ALP LEFT WINGERS HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO CRITICIZE WHITLAM ON THIS ISSUE DURING THE CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS. IN GENERAL, OPPOSITION LEADERS ARE NOT OPPOSED TO GOI INITIATIVES IN TIMOR. THUS THE ISSUE IS FAIRLY WELL UNDER CONTROL AT PRESENT. HOWEVER, ALP MEMBERS CAN BE EXPECTED TO INTENSIFY THEIR ATTACK ON WHITLAM'S PRO-GOI TIMOR POLICY WHEN AUSTRALIA'S POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES ARE EVENTUALLY UNDER CONTROL.

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